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ARTISTIC PICTURE FRAMES.

FRAMES, whilst a necessary means of protection and finish to paintings, constitute an important element of mural decoration. When of brilliant hue they impart a decided aspect of cheerfulness to an apartment; if of dark hardwoods or subdued tints they afford a pleasing contrast to sparkling colors. Refined design and good finish in picture frames satisfy the critical eye, and however minute the details of ornamentation, these have the advantage from position of being clearly apparent.

Simple or elaborately ornamented, slender or massive, they provide gratification in appropriateness when secured, whether as to form, proportion, or color. Nor are they always without an evident influence on the scenes and objects portrayed.

In old and modern times many eminent artists have so fully recognized this influence as to design their own frames. Gold, the most general coating, has a softening and mellowing effect, and as most

another thing to invest it with a special charm or classic grace.

A somewhat novel and pleasing device, after the old Italian manner, that has been introduced, is the overlaying the flat central panels of a frame with open cut steel foliage conventionalized, the metallic surface covered with damascened work, the frame being of dark hard-wood.

Symbolic or other designs in character with a painting will always be admired, as, for instance, a vine in relief encircling the view of an Italian vintage, or ivy in gray color clambering over bars of gold as a setting for a woodland scene. The frame to a village festival may have instruments of music in relief; of a war, military arms and trophies; of an ocean scene, delicate marine plants on a ground of wave-like undulations. Broad frames of white oak or other choice woods in one piece and with slight incised ornamentation, arabesque or in plain lines, the center being oval, are quite in style.

A large proportion of frames with or without

be brought within the line of frame, but appear as irregular projections from it. When a frame has a sunk outer border lying close to the wall, raised work on the upper portion may project beyond, so that it falls within such border. These borders, which place the whole frame in higher relief, may be formed by interlacing fret work, leaf and other moldings.

Cavetto hollows or sweeps, deeply grooved in side of frames, relieve them from undue heaviness, besides affording good effects of light and shade. For inner edges of frames, black and vermilion make an appropriate finish to gold surfaces, but where frames are of light colors these may be continued to the edge; a dark-colored frame with ornaments picked out in gold or light colors to give greater effect to the relief, may have the same hues continued to the inner verge.

All must have noticed how a wide expanse of gold on a frame will brighten up a landscape or water scene, and invest flowers with the semblance of growing in a sunshiny atmosphere. These



This sideboard may be executed in San Domingo Mahogany or Quartered Oak darkened to simulate age, not too much, but simply to take away the appearance of extreme newness. If made in Mahogany, the carving will admit of more intricate finish than would be the case if executed in Oak, which looks fully as well when retaining a certain roughness of effect. The decoration in cove above mirror in center is intended to be carved, but would look equally as well if illuminated leather were substituted. In upper cupboards beveled glasses should be used as well as the mirror in center. This sideboard can be made to order, in the manner here described, for \$250.00 in Quartered Oak, or \$300.00 in Mahogany.

closely approximating to light, may, as a general rule, be employed with most assurance of satisfactory effect. There are, however, a vast variety of combinations of colors which may contribute to frame decoration.

With the powerful art impulses that now prevail, and largely fed from medieval sources, it is to the credit of artistic taste displayed in framing that, with all the special features adopted for ornamentation, a chastened simplicity in the production of well-connected details obtains a preference over outré conceits. Excessive ornamentation, even though full of salient features, will often degrade the beauty of a frame. Nothing is easier than to design a frame, but it is quite

relief ornamentation superadded to their general forms as if by general agreement based on the propriety of the treatment, consist of the alternate concave and convex moldings, divided off by flat surface lines.

We may point out what many frame makers appear to have overlooked, that in curved forms segments of an oval are far more graceful than those of a circle and admit both of greater variations and more varied dispositions. The oval and not the circle is the perfect figure and alone provides the contour of "the line of beauty."

Where ornamentation in relief appears on a frame, an unsatisfactory effect will unfailingly be produced should the figures in the grouping not

effects are the more apparent where the inner sides of the frame sweep down in alternating concave and convex forms from a narrow rounded ridge. The surface colors of a frame should be such as will improve the general effect of a painting. As paintings are so frequently inspected by artificial light, it is worth remembering that under this light blue becomes darker, red or yellow hues lighter; a pure yellow in fact approaches to white. Delicate colors, such as the combination of pink and gold, tell well on water color paintings with their semi-translucent aspect. A ground of mottled blue and gold will set off admirably raised wreaths in gray flowers and foliage shaded with gold.